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ABSTRACT

The Instituto Caro y Cuervo of Bogota, Colombia, named after two outstanding Colombian intellectuals, was established in 1942 primarily to complete the lexicographic work of Rufino Jose Cuervo. It has continued its work through several reorganizations, and in 1947 was charged with the study of the present state of the Spanish language in various regions of Colombia. Its current goals include continuation of the dictionary, study of all aspects of Spanish language in Colombia and Latin America, preparation of a linguistic atlas of Colombia and a general glossary of Colombian Spanish, compilation of a dictionary of Americanisms, formation of a bibliography of national and Latin American culture, collection of documents and materials for the study of national and Latin American culture, publication of the works and correspondence of Caro and Cuervo, preparation of critical editions of other authors, and in general, the pursuit and dissemination of linguistic, philological, literary, and bibliographic knowledge. (MSE)

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Linguistic Activities of the Instituto Caro y Cuervo*

The Instituto Caro y Cuervo of Bototà, Colombia was named in honor of two outstanding Colombian intellectuals of the nineteenth century: Miguel Antonio Caro and Rufino José Cuervo. These two scholars, along with Marco Fidel Suárez, were called the "triumvirate of Colombian culture" by Ramón Menéndez Pidal (Boletín de la Academia Española 35 (1956) 164; cited in Guitarte and Torres Quintero, p. 578). They found their inspiration in the works of Andrés Bello (1781-1865), especially his Gramática de la lengua castellana, destinada al uso de los americanos (Santiago de Chile, 1847). As Guillermo Guitarte and Rafael Torres Quintero note (Current trends in linguistics, Vol. 4; The Hague, 1968, 578): "It has been said of Bello that he was born in Venezuela, taught in Chile and had his disciples in Colombia."

Caro and Cuervo were born in Bogotá within a year of each other, Caro in 1843 and Cuervo in 1844.

Miguel Antonio Caro was a statesman, poet, journalist, politician, humanist and scholar. He is remembered for, among other works, his Gramática latina (Bogotá, 1867; written in collaboration with Cuervo), his translations of Virgil and other Roman poets, literary criticism and grammatical studies. He was one of the three founders of the Academia Colombiana de la Lengua and, although elected vice-president of the republic, actually served as president from 1892 to 1898.

In the field of language studies Cuervo is the more important. His life centered about his studies. He is chiefly remembered for three works:

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1) Apuntaciones críticas sobre el lenguage bogotano (Bogotá, 1867-72), in which Colombian usage is compared to classical Spanish, along with observations on other Latin American usage, thus outlining the beginning of dialect studies and language history in Latin America.

2) His Notas to Bello's Gramática, which since 1874 have been published along with the Gramática.

3) Diccionario de construcción y régimen de la lengua castellana (Paris, Vol. I, 1886, A-B; Vol. II, 1893, C-D).

This dictionary, Cuervo's opus magnum, was left unfinished. Its continuation, as we shall see below, was the principal motive for the founding of the Instituto Caro y Cuervo. For those unfamiliar with the dictionary, a brief characterization, adapted from José Porto Dapena (Elementos de lexicografía: el "Diccionario de construcción y régimen" de R.J. Cuervo; Bogotá, 1980) follows:

1) The dictionary is selective or restricted, in that it treats only those words of standard Spanish which exhibit some syntactic peculiarity, whether because of the kinds of constructions they can enter into, the changes of grammatical function they may undergo, or the part they play in the linking of terms or phrases. It is not a general dictionary.

2) It is descriptive, based on extensive citations from literary Spanish.

3) It is diachronic. Words are investigated historically and etymologically.

4) Its aim is normative.

5) It is not destined for the general public but, rather, for those specializing in language studies.

Cuervo dedicated some 24 years of his life to the Dictionary. Only two volumes were published in his lifetime, encompassing words beginning with "A" through "D", consisting of more than 2300 pages, treating in monographic form some 1200 words and including more than 50,000 citations or texts. In addition, he left 53 completed monographs treating words beginning with the letter "E", citations only for entries through the letter "L" and, jotted down in very cryptic form, sources for citations, very incomplete, for entries through the rest of the alphabet.

For reasons that are not completely clear (perhaps because of disputes with his publisher, failing health, or the death of his brother Angel) Cuervo stopped work on the Dictionary about 1896, 15 years before his death in Paris in 1911 (Caro had died in Bogotá in 1909).

Cuervo left his books and papers to the Biblioteca Nacional in Bogotá. In 1940 the national government hired two men, Father Félix Restrepo and Pedro Urbano González de la Calle, a Spanish exile, on a part-time basis to continue work on Cuervo's Dictionary at what was called informally the Instituto Rufino José Cuervo. They were joined by several other part-time workers.

In 1942, at the urging of the Academia Colombiana de la Lengua, the Congress, in order to celebrate the centennial of the birth of two of its most distinguished sons, passed a law formally establishing the Instituto Caro y Cuervo. Its goals as set out in the law were:

1) To continue work on the Dictionary;

2) To study the languages and dialects of the indigenous peoples of Colombia;

3) To pursue philological studies and to make known the results of these studies.

While the Instituto has been reorganized several times since 1942, it has continued to function since that time, in contrast with other similar organizations which, for political, economic or other reasons, have disappeared. Also, while some of its goals have changed, those of the continuation of the Dictionary and of the diffusion of knowledge have remained constant.

In 1947 the responsibility for the study of indigenous languages was transferred to the Instituto Etnológico Nacional (later called the Instituto Colombiano de Antropología) and the Instituto Caro y Cuervo was charged instead with the study of the present state of the Spanish language in the various regions of the country. In

a legislative decree of 1954 the goals of the Instituto were spelled out quite specifically, and with few changes these remain the goals of the Institute today. These goals are:

1) Continuation of the Dictionary.

2) Study of all aspects of the Spanish language in Colombia and Latin America;

3) Preparation of a linguistic atlas of Colombia and a general glossary of Colombian Spanish;

4) Compilation of a dictionary of Americanisms;

5) Formation of a bibliography of national and Latin American culture;

6) Collection of documents and materials for the study of national and Latin American culture;

7) Publication of the works and correspondence of Caro and Cuervo;

8) Preparation of critical editions of other authors;

9) In general, the pursuit and dissemination of linguistic, philological, literary and bibliographic knowledge.

Some of these activities will be discussed below. First, I shall mention briefly the subdivisions within the Institute.

In 1949 the departments of lexicography and dialectology were established in order to carry out effectively the major linguistic tasks of the Institute. Later, departments of bibliography, cultural history and classical philology were added and, in 1957, the Seminario Andrés Bello was established as a teaching department within the Institute. In 1977 a department of linguistics was established to cooperate with the department of lexicography on the continuation of the Dictionary. Also in 1977 the charge of studying the indigenous languages was transferred back to the Institute and a section devoted to this pursuit was created within the department of dialectology.

In 1953 and 1954 the Institute published facsimile editions of Volumes I and II of the Dictionary, long out of print. In 1959 the first fascicle of Volume III was published with the cooperation of the Panamerican Union (later the Organization of American States). Progress has been exceedingly slow because of the nature of the Dictionary itself, the lack of adequately trained personnel, the lack of bibliographic resources and the lack of rigidly established criteria for entries. Work, however, continues. The latest fascicle available is number 17, still treating words beginning with the letter "E".

In the other major long-term project, the linguistic atlas, called ALEC (Atlas lingüístico-etnográfico de Colombia), results have been more gratifying, largely due to the fact that it continued in the capable hands of one person, Luis Flórez, head of the department of dialectology from the time of its establishment in 1949 until his death in 1985.

Ground work for the ALEC began in 1954 with the training of interviewers to carry out the field work. In 1955 a preliminary questionaire was drawn up, and in 1956 Luis Flórez consulted with linguists who had undertaken similar projects in other countries.

The first preliminary interview took place in 1956. The questionaire was to undergo a number of revisions. The interviews took place over the next 20 years. Natives of 260 localities were interviewed. The following subjects were covered (Luis Flórez and José Joaquín Montes Giraldo, El atlas lingüístico-etnográfico de Colombia, Boletín de la Academia Colombiana 31, 1981: 287-90):

> The human body, clothing, the home, food, the family, life cycle, institutions, religious life, festivals and entertainment, time and space, the fields, crops, vegetables, industries related to agriculture, cattle-raising, domestic animals, wild animals, trades and occupations, boats and fishing, transportation, phonetics, grammar, and proper names.

In addition, observations were made on folklore, material aspects of life and idiomatic expressions. Artifacts were collected, photographs were taken and conversations and songs were recorded. The field work was not an easy task (Luis Flórez, El atlas lingüístico-etnográfico de Colombia (ALEC). Nota Informativa. Thesaurus 16 (1961) 77-89: 81):

> Los encuestadores del Atlas colombiano hemos sufrido resignadamente muy malas condiciones de alojamiento, alimentación e higiene, así como fríos intensos, fortísimos calores tropicales, nubes de moscas que no dejan comer o de mosquitos y otras cosas que no dejan dormir. A los rigores del medio físico se ha agregado de vez en cuando la excesiva desconfianza de la gente. Pero en general nos han ayudado, y en algunos sitios hasta nos han agasajado.
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> Para hacer las encuestas hemos viajado de diversos modos: en avión, en tren, en bus, en automóvil, en jeep, en camión de carga, en lancha, en canoa, a caballo y aun a pie algunos trechos.

For five years following the last interview in 1976 the material was studied and the most appropriate material was selected for presentation in map form. By the summer of 1982 the first volume had been published. The remaining five volumes were published in 1983, as well as a Manual del "Atlas lingüístico-etnográfico de Colombia. The six volumes contain some 1200 maps with accompanying texts and photographs.

ALEC puts an enormous amount of material into the hands of linguists and others interested in various aspects of language study. It will preserve dialectal forms which, with the passing of time, will fall out of use. It will be indispensable in delimiting dialect zones. It provides a huge data base which will be invaluable for numerous lexical studies. Members of the Institute have already made use of some of this material and have published a number of studies such as Léxico del cuerpo humano en Colombia (Luis Flórez, 1969) and Muestra del léxico de la pesca en Colombia (José Joaquín Montes Giraldo and Luis Flórez, 1973).

The success of the Institute has been due to the devotion and vision of its founders. Father Félix Restrepo was the director until 1948 when he was named

honorary president, a title he kept until his death in 1965 (in fact he was listed as honorary president on the masthead of the Institute's journal until 1975). José Manuel Rivas Sacconi was named director in 1948, a position he has occupied ever since. Rafael Torres Quintero was named sub-director in 1951 and still holds that position. When Rivas Sacconi was named ambassador to Italy in 1978, Torres Quintero became acting director. Fernando Antonio Martínez was in charge of lexicography until his death in 1972. The present head of the department is Jaime Bernal Leongómez. Francisco Sánchez Arévalo has continued to serve as the general secretary since 1950. Luis Flórez, as mentioned above, was the head of the department of dialectology from its creation in 1949 until his death in 1985, when José Joaquín Montes Giraldo was named his successor. A number of these scholars have also been members of the Academia Colombiana de la Lengua, including José Manuel Rivas Sacconi, Rafael Torres Quintero, Father Félix Restrepo and Luis Flórez.

The Institute published the first issue of its journal, Boletín del Instituto Caro y Cuervo, in 1945. The name of the journal was changed to Thesaurus in 1951 and it continues to be published today. The Institute has an impressive list of book-length publications, the first being works of Caro and of Cuervo, and more recently including such titles as Elementos de gramática generativa (1981) by Jaime Bernal Leongómez, mentioned above. Luis Flórez alone has published some ten books on varying aspects of Colombian Spanish. Other well known works include Gerhard Rohlfs, Manual de filología hispánica (1957), Lincoln Delos Canfield, La pronunciación del español en América (1962) and Homero Seris, Bibliografía de la lingüística española (1964).

In addition to the major series (73 titles at the beginning of 1986) and the "Series minor" (25 titles), the following series are also published: Filólogos

Colombianos (9), Serie Bibliográfica (13), Biblioteca Colombiana (24), Clásicos Colombianos (8), Archivo Epistolar Colombiano (18), La Granada Entreabierta (40). Some 30 other works have also been published, including an Anuario Bibliográfico. In addition to Thesaurus, another journal, Noticias culturales, was published from 1961 until 1975. This journal reappeared in 1982 in a "Segunda época" and continues to be published. An index to the first 25 volumes of Thesaurus has also been published. The Institute has had, by any measure, an extremely active publishing career. Eugenio Coseriu writes (Current trends in linguistics, Vol 4; The Hague, 1968, 16-17): "Since the old group of Buenos Aires dispersed [In 1946 Amado Alonso had to leave Argentina for political reasons. The group broke up and many of his followers took up positions in other countries.] , the ICC [Instituto Caro y Cuervo] has become the leading center for Spanish American studies, although it lacks the continental orientation of the Instituto de Filología...and has not reached in certain aspects the rigor and technical perfection of the work done in Argentina." Later, he adds (p.44): "Since this work [Tomás Navarro Tomás' El español en Puerto Rico (Piedras Negras, P.R., 1948)] ...dialect geography has advanced in Argentina...in Uruguay..., and above all in Colombia where the ICC has become the foremost center for dialect geography in Spanish America, and where the preparation of the ALEC...has fairly advanced."

I believe that with the publication of its linguistic atlas, the Instituto Caro y Cuervo has lived up to its potential in linguistic geography and, further, that it remains in the forefront of linguistic investigation in Latin America.

*The author had the opportunity to revisit the Instituto Caro y Cuervo in the Summer of 1982 when he was field coordinator for a six-week Fulbright-Hays study trip in Colombia. Shortly thereafter, a preliminary version of the present study was read at the Spanish Linguistics section of the South Central Modern Language Association in San Antonio, Texas (October, 1982). While preparing the present version, the author was saddened to learn of the death of Luis Flórez in May of 1985.